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RELATIONS BETWEEN THE ASSOCIATION AND THE SOCIETY[1]

Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen: I am very sorry that Professor Ernest William Brown, of Yale University, President of the American Mathematical Society, could not be here to greet and encourage the Mathematical Association of America on this occasion. As an old friend of his I think that I know what his feeling would be on this occasion. As a member of the Council of the American Mathematical Society and as the member of the Society of longest standing present at this meeting (although I say this with some diffidence in the presence of Professor Fine and Professor Woolsey Johnson, who twenty-five years ago helped to bring about the transformation of the small New York Society into a society of national scope), possibly I may take on myself the pleasant duty of expressing to the new Association the felicitations of the older Society. The infant is beginning its activities with much greater resources and with much greater physical vigor than characterized the older Society. After twenty-five years of constant but comparatively slow growth the American Mathematical Society has a membership of less than 800, while the new Association now on the day of its first meeting numbers considerably over 1,000.

These two organizations must have intimate and friendly relations for many reasons. In the first place, they have a large body of members in common. Men who have played a very important part in the scientific activities and in the administrative conduct of the American Mathematical Society have had a great deal to do with the establishment of the Mathematical Association of America. In the second place, they have, to a large extent, a common aim, or more accurately, closely related and mutually helpful aims. It is, therefore, almost inconceivable that there should be anything but the most friendly rivalry between these bodies. They can be only allies and staunch supporters of each other. The primary aim of the American Mathematical Society is the advancement of mathematical science by the stimulation of research. I take it that the primary aim of the Mathematical Association of America is the advancement of mathematical science by the stimulation of teaching. Those who are interested in contemporary research will naturally wish to attach themselves to the former. Those whose time and strength are largely given to undergraduate teaching may find the latter more helpful. For my part I am inclined to think that every American mathematician should wish to belong to both organizations.

Let us hope that as the Mathematical Association grows in size and influence it may find itself possessed of sufficient funds to enlarge the scope and number of its publications. It may be able to prepare and publish extensive reports on different phases and aspects of mathematical teaching, thus continuing and supplementing for this country the work begun by the International Commission on the Teaching of Mathematics. Then again, it may be able to undertake or assist in the publication of monographs or treatises which would tend to elevate the standard of teaching. Such works sometimes hold forth no prospect of financial return. Abroad they often have the moral support and financial assistance of the government. But in this country some other agency, perhaps the Mathematical Association of America, must supply the need.

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[1] An address given at the dinner of the Association in Cambridge on September 1, 1916, by Professor Thomas S. Fiske, Ex-President of the American Mathematical Society.

In concluding these brief remarks I wish to recommend to all who have not done so recently that they read the address delivered by the late Dr. Emory McClintock on the occasion of his retirement from the presidency of the American Mathematical Society in December, 1894. This address entitled "The Past and Future of the Society" was published in the *Bulletin* for January, 1895. From it I will quote a paragraph which should be of special interest to this newly established Association and of which a few lines have a ring almost prophetical:

"While the Society is not directly concerned in encouraging the study of the higher mathematics among the young, its indirect influence in that direction has undoubtedly been felt, and must be felt increasingly as time goes on. Years ago, when the present century was much younger, the course of study in our colleges was so arranged as to give a large proportion of the time of the undergraduates to the study of mathematics. Subsequently, the tendency in colleges having uniform courses of study was to cut down the number of hours given to this science, as well as to the classics, and to parcel out the time among the modern languages and various sciences. It is believed that even already the organization, the meetings, and the publications of the Society have, by the effect of numbers in association, perceptibly strengthened the tone of the mathematical departments of many institutions of learning and assisted in enabling them, more or less successfully, to stem the hostile tide of sentiment to which I have just referred. I say 'assisted,' for other agencies, especially the journals, have done great good. That the dissemination of knowledge concerning the gigantic strides lately made and still making in mathematical science must in the future have the same favorable effect to an even greater extent is not to be doubted."

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